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DICTA

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Calendar

October 3—First regular meeting of the Denver Bar Association for the new fiscal year, Chamber of Commerce Dining Room, at 12:15 p.m.
October 13, 14 and 15—51st annual convention of the Colorado Bar Association at the Broadmoor, Colorado Springs.

An Approach for New Standards of Admission

BY WM. HEDGES ROBINSON, JR.

President, Colorado Bar Association

Since publication of my article in the August issue of *Dicta*, I have received letters and telephone calls and held many conversations dealing with overcrowding of the profession and suggesting remedies. I believe that some of the more well-considered suggestions should be printed so that the bar, the Supreme Court, and the law schools can discuss them and eventually arrive at a common meeting ground.

The plan that seems to meet the situation as simply as possible and yet give proper safeguards to the public, the student, and the bar, affords every promise of bettering the legal profession. It imposes obligations on the bench, the bar, the law schools, and the student, thus tending to unify the entire profession. Under this plan, all freshmen students at the end of their course of study would be given a comprehensive examination on those courses by the bar examiners. The deans of the three law schools would be ex-officio members of the State Board of Bar Examiners. Failure to pass this examination would mean that the student could not take the second year examination. He could, however, continue the course in the law school. Students who did not desire to be admitted to practice in Colorado could complete their legal training without being required to take or pass these comprehensive examinations.

After passage of the freshman examination and upon completion of the second year in law school, the student would be required to take and pass an examination covering second year law school subjects. Similarly at the end of the third year, he must take and pass the third year examination. Not more than two yearly examinations could be taken in any twelve month period by a student. Two failures in any yearly examination would bar the student from taking further examinations.

After passing the third year examination and being approved after a morals investigation, the student would be given a limited license to practice

which would entitle him to appear before all trial courts, but not before any appellate court. Within six months after the new lawyer began to practice, he would be required to associate himself with an experienced and approved attorney of his own selection. It would be possible for the young lawyer to practice by himself, but for a period of a year he would be under the guidance of an experienced lawyer.

At the end of a three to five year period, the new lawyer could then apply for an unlimited license. If the record of the applicant were in order, and upon the passage of an examination limited to appellate practice and procedure in the state and federal courts, the applicant would be given an unrestricted license. He would be free to use the restricted license only during all of his practice if he so desired.

Nothing in the plan would prohibit a student from securing a law degree without taking or passing the yearly examinations. But such a student could not be admitted to practice in Colorado until after five years of practice elsewhere. No lawyer from any other state could be admitted to practice in Colorado until after (1) the National Conference of Bar Examiners had reported favorably upon the professional reputation and integrity of the applicant, and (2) the applicant had passed a comprehensive and thorough examination in which emphasis was placed primarily upon the applicant's knowledge of Colorado law and procedures. Of course, students from other schools desiring to practice in Colorado would be required to take the yearly examinations.

As an adjunct to this plan, the requirements for entrance to the law schools should include a four year pre-legal course with at least minimum requirements in English, English composition, American and English history, accounting, economics, political science, perhaps some medical knowledge dealing chiefly with medical terminology and anatomy, and related subjects. The course in law schools should be comprehensive but with more emphasis than is customary on modern procedures and techniques. The night school course should be placed on a four year basis.

The plan is so simple and just that it is great wonder that it has not been adopted before this. It weeds out early in his collegiate career, the obvious incompetent and, with little waste, turns him to a vocational trail where his talents can be better utilized. Thus it saves these students time and money. It ensures that the education of all law students is uniform and sufficiently comprehensive. It makes a working team of the law schools, the profession, and the Supreme Court. It eliminates the undesirable applicants from other states, and makes certain that unless the applicant has a sound reason and opportunity for practice in Colorado he will not apply for admission.

It provides guidance for the young lawyer when he most needs assistance, advice, and a friendly hand. Finally it guarantees to the public that only soundly educated and trained men and women can be admitted to practice in Colorado.